

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated June 22, 2006, taking into account the October 10, 2006 telephone interview. Claims 23, 27, 29, 30, 35, 36, 41, 42, 45 and 46 have been amended, and new Claims 50-65 have been added. No new matter has been added to the Claims. Enclosed is a Petition for a Two-Month Extension of Time to respond to the Office Action. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account 02-1818 for any fees which are due and owing.

The Office Action rejected: (a) Claims 23, 27, 29-30, 33, 35-36, 38, 40-42, 45-46 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,439,993 to O'Halloran ("O'Halloran"); and (b) Claims 24-26, 28, 31-32, 34, 37, 39, 43-44, 47 and 49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over O'Halloran. As explained in the interview, Applicants respectfully disagree with such rejection. Based on such interview, it is Applicants' understanding that such rejections rely, at least in part, upon Figs. 4a-4f and 5a-5z of O'Halloran. For example, it is Applicants' understanding that the Examiner has interpreted Fig. 5i as disclosing the concept of applying the @ wildcard symbol to only four of the five positions along a pay line. As discussed, Applicants submit that O'Halloran's Specification does not support such interpretation in the Specification's description of such Figures. Nonetheless, to advance the prosecution of this application, Applicants have elected to amend the independent Claims and add new Claims.

Amended independent Claim 23 recites "the different combinations being positioned along a plurality of different pay lines." Amended independent Claim 29 recites "the first and second groups of symbols being positioned along a plurality of different pay lines." Amended independent Claim 35 recites "the first and second combinations being positioned along a plurality of different pay lines." Amended independent Claim 41 recites "wherein the first and second groups of symbols are positioned along a plurality of different pay lines." Amended independent Claim 45 recites "wherein the first and second combinations of symbols are positioned along a plurality of different pay lines."

New independent Claims 50 and 54 each recite: "each one of the combinations having a non-linear configuration." New independent Claim 58 recites: "(f) if the symbol at the visually distinguished location is of the first type, provide the non-winning outcome, (g) if the symbol at the visually distinguished location is of the second type: (i) treat said symbol as wild, (ii) determine whether the winning combination occurs based on the wild treatment of said symbol, (iii) provide the winning outcome if the winning combination occurs, and (iv) provide the non-winning outcome if the winning combination does not occur." New independent Claims 64 recites: "(f) if said symbol is of the second type: (i) treat said symbol as wild, (ii) determine whether the winning combination occurs based on the wild treatment of said symbol, (iii) provide the winning outcome if the winning combination occurs, and (iv) provide the non-winning outcome if the winning combination does not occur."

Applicants submit that O'Halloran does not disclose the subject matter defined by any of the independent Claims described above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the Claims submitted herewith are in condition for allowance. An earnest endeavor has been made to place this application in condition for formal allowance and in the absence of more pertinent art, such action is courteously solicited.

As mentioned in the interview, if the Examiner has any questions or suggestions relating to this Response, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner call the undersigned directly at 312-807-4443.

Respectfully submitted,

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